

THE FIRST EASTER SONG.



HE said world
slept in the
stillness
That followed a
day of pain;
Night folded the
quietude,
Peace mantled
the outer
plain.

Above the shadowy
mountains
Faint stars in
vigil shone,
Below—in the
darkened garden
A watch and a
sealed stone.

slighed in passing
Its sorrowful, lonely way,
Light mists arose to herald
The daybreak cool and gray

Soft couched 'mid the olive branches
A bird in her tiny nest,
Feeling her young ones nestle
Closely against her breast.

Stirred in the early twilight
Fluttered a little way
Where, close to the rock-hewn chamber,
Droopeth a lily spray.

A-down thro' the vine-wreathed garden,
In the fragrant early gloom,
Two came a-weary, seeking
Their dead in the guarded tomb.

But the chamber closed at even
Was empty at break of day,
Far from the sealed portal
The stone was rolled away.

A-near, like a radiant presence,
One stood with an angel face,
And spake: "Hail ever the living
With the silent dead a place?"

"He is not here; He is risen,"
And lo! in the day spring fair
'Tis said, in the Easter legend,
A bird song filled the air.

A song of the tiny birdling
From the nest in the olive tree,
As if for the Christ arisen
To immortality.

It fell on the weary spirits
Like the touch of a perfect calm,
And the whole earth hushed and listened
To the world's first Easter psalm.

It must be but a fancy,
But it fills our eyes with tears,
And ever the sweet bird music
Ringeth across the years.

Even to endless ages,
To people yet to be,
Shall come the song of the birdling
From the nest on the olive tree.
—Marion Colburn, in Youth's Companion.

EASTER BLOSSOMS.

The Romance of Two Boxes of Flowers.

[Written for This Paper.]



YOU will be sure
to send them
Saturday after-
noon without
fail, and be
careful to have
them packed so
that they will
keep fresh until
the next day?"
"Certainly,
sir."

"And here's my card,
which I should like
to have you put in the box
with the flowers."
"All right, sir."

The foregoing conversation took place
between Jack Storrs and Smith, the
florist. The first-named gentleman,
having tender regards for a certain
young lady, had several days before
Easter determined upon a visit to the
horticulturist's to make sure of a choice
pick from the many fine blossoms on
sale there.

He was exceedingly particular, as
most young men under similar circum-
stances are, and had ordered several doz-
en Jacqueminots, her favorite flower.
He paid the florist's fat bill without a
murmur and departed, self-satisfied and
happy in the thought of the surprise and
delight with which his fair innamorata
would receive this thoughtful compli-
ment.

He lived in another world, almost,
for the remainder of the week, being
hardly able to wait until Sunday when
he could call and tell her the old, old
story that is ever new.

At the florist's Saturday all was bustle
and confusion. Not only were there
numerous orders to fill and deliver,
enough to keep Bill, the errand boy,
busy all day, but the store was contin-
ually thronged with a heterogeneous
collection of humanity with a great di-
versity of tastes waiting to secure their
modest little parcels of nosegays.

The order in which we are particu-
larly interested had been as carefully
packed as the great rush would allow
and Bill was receiving instructions as
to its delivery, and was told to step
lively, as another large box was await-
ing delivery to its destination at the
other end of town. He started at a liv-
ely gait, but as the distance increased
between him and the store his speed
correspondingly decreased. However,
he was making good headway when
some one sang out:

"Hello, Bill! Rather hustlin' to-day,
ain't you? Jimminy, but yours is no
snail! What's you got in the box—
posies? Let's have a peep, won't yer?"
The gunner "I'll never know" (this with
a sly wink and cunning chuckle meant
for the group of boys on the corner, and
indicating that he was proficient in all
the questionable arts of the street
gamin).

Bill, although acquainted with Dan,
and, boy-like, admired his questionable
accomplishments, knew his mother dis-
tinctly and was averse to his having

any thing to do with him. He also
knew his employer objected emphati-
cally to his loitering when sent on an
errand and really meant to keep on
without stopping, when Dan said:

"Can't you hole up a minnit, or is yer
gettin' so high-toned yer can't talk to
yer old fren's what used to be good
enough to associate with? I've got
somethin' to show yer what 'll make
them eyes o' yourn water with envious-
ness. But yer can't see it till we all has
one peep at the flowers. What I've got
is a real watch what goes, and if you'll
just open the box a speck yer can take
it in yer hand."

Ah! sharp youngster. He knew if he
could arouse Bill's curiosity the deed
was done.

"Well, I wish I dared, but the boss
wouldn't like it," said Bill, hesitat-
ingly.

A shout of derision greeted this, and
Dan said, with a sneer:

"So, softie, you's afraid, be you? The
gunner 'll never suspect nothin'. Come
on; here's a nice quiet place where we's
can all have a show."

He hesitated and was lost. He re-
moved the wrappings with trembling
fingers, guarding his charge with jeal-
ous hands from the willing aid that was



HIS FRIENDS EACH GRABBED A FLOWER
AND RAN.

offered. It was a large box, and in try-
ing to keep the boys from crushing it in
their eagerness he found it difficult to
remove the cover. Finally this was ac-
complished, however, and then all want-
ed to occupy the best position to see. It
commenced with a gentle crowding, and
was followed by one of the boys on the
outer edge giving a little push and the
next fellow giving a still harder
push, until, seized with a sudden
and mischievous impulse, two or three
of the boys gave a tremendous shove
against those standing next to Bill, who
was holding the precious box, and
despite all they could do down they
went and the box shot out into the
street, distributing its contents all along
the pavement and gutter. A lively
wind was blowing at the time, and the
way it sent those blossoms flying was a
caution. Bill, dazed and speechless
with terror at the accident, seemed un-
able to make a move, and before he could
recover his scattered senses his friends
had each grabbed a flower and ran.

After the first fright was over he be-
gan to consider what was to be done to
extricate himself from this predicament.
There was only one thing he
could do, he thought, and that was to
put a bold face on the matter and say
nothing about it unless found out.

And Jack, in blissful ignorance of the
fate of his present and what his loss
would, in the days to come, mean to him
and his adored, waited with impatience
the coming of Easter.

Sunday came at last, however, with
warm southern breezes and a cloudless
sky; one of those bright days when a
"young man's fancies" are supposed to
"lightly turn to thoughts of love."

That morning Jack made his toilet
with particular care and was ready for
church a full half-hour before time for
services, a thing of which he was seldom
guilty. He thought to take it leisurely
and reach the church none too early, but
love is impatient, and as he approached
the church the bells were yet chiming
forth their sweet, glad Easter greeting
to a saved world.

Jack was a modest young man, fond
of seeing and not being seen, and so
settled himself in a pew in the back
part of the church. The edifice was
most beautifully and artistically deco-
rated and festooned with rare plants and
flowers. The pulpit platform was one
great bank of blooming foliage. It was
a sight both refreshing and lovely and
Jack could not help enjoying the scene,
though his thoughts were far away.

The organ pealed forth in response to
the animated touch of the enthusiastic
organist, the choir and congregation
rose to join their voices in one glad
burst of hosannas of praise to God in
the highest whose Son had died and to-
day is risen, but still the one Jack most
wished to see came not. He had been
casting furtive glances in the direction
of the door, and as the great concourse
of people was singing the last line of
the hymn he was rewarded by seeing
her enter. But—was it possible? Could
he believe his eyes?

Yes; they had revealed only too faith-
fully the true condition of affairs. The
confusion of thoughts that came rushing
upon him made his brain whirl round
and round, and ere he could regain his
composure she had passed up the aisle to
her father's pew, never deigning a look
or smile in his direction, although he
was certain she had seen him.

The agony of that long and, to him,
almost endless hour! Will he ever for-
get it? The air was stifling; he could

hardly catch his breath. And how he
hated himself and Lydia and every body
else.

But finally the last hymn was sung,
the last prayer said, and he was breath-
ing the fresh air once more. As he be-
came more rational he began to suspect
that perhaps, through some possible
oversight, the florist had not filled his
order. No sooner had he reached this
conclusion than he started with haste
in that direction.

"Storrs? Storrs? Why, most as-
suredly, sir. Box of flowers to young
lady in B. street, to be delivered Satur-
day p. m. Were they not received?"

"Well—er—I couldn't say positively.
That is—I mean she did not wear
them this morning," said poor, confused
Jack, blushing violently.

"Of course they were sent. I remem-
ber now, the boy started early in the
afternoon with them and when he re-
turned he said he had delivered them
all right."

Not a word could Jack say. To his
mind there was but one version to the
whole affair, and in his anger and indig-
nation at the terrible cut he accepted it
as the true one.

The weary weeks and months dragged
themselves out, and Jack was seldom
seen at the numerous gatherings and
socials. Lydia was nearly always there,
however, and entered into the gayeties
with a spirit that unsuccessfully tried
to be light and happy.

There was an ache in her heart and
many a tear fell in the privacy of her
own room, where of late she spent a
large share of her time.

Papa and mamma noticed that some-
thing ailed their darling girl, and, not
being able to assign a better reason for
her white face and delicate appetite, con-
cluded she needed a change of air
and scenery. This Lydia denied most
stoutly, and protested that she was in
perfect health. She knew but too well
what would bring back the sunshine to
her bright eyes and lovely face. She
knew, but said not a word to anybody.
But it was so hard. She could not un-
derstand why Jack acted as he did and
never came near her any more. What
had she done that he should avoid her
so? If she could but solve the mystery,
assign some motive for Jack's conduct!

As time wore on they drifted farther
and farther apart, until the breach be-
came so wide that seemingly nothing
could bridge it and restore the lovers to
each other again.

Jack's bosom friend, Charley Walters,
knew there was something wrong, but
for the life of him he could not fathom
the mystery. He was too considerate
of his friend's feelings to dwell on a sub-
ject so evidently painful to him, and
but for a few little slips Jack had un-
consciously made he knew practically
nothing about the affair.

Summer and autumn had come and
gone, winter was fast going, and as
spring approached Charley was no near-
er a solution of his friend's depression
than he had been months before. They
were speaking of the early spring that
was promising, and Charley said:

"Well, the Lenten season is nearly
completed, and with the revival of so-
ciety's gayeties I want you, my friend,
also to throw off this melancholy spirit
and be cheerful again as you used to
be."

His friend sat silent for a moment as
if mentally debating some question,
and then replied:

"I never told you, Charley, why I have
changed so within the past year. I have
hesitated so long because the subject is
a most painful one to me. I tell you
now that you may understand and not
insist that I go with you into society."

He told the entire story faithfully
and wound up with: "It was a terrible
blow to me to be treated thus by the
girl I loved so dearly. To be sure I
never intimated by word of mouth that
I cared for her, but how could I speak
when I loved her so intensely and knew
not that my love was in the least re-
ciprocated."

"But is it not possible that you might
be mistaken? Perhaps the flowers
never reached her," said his sympa-
thetic friend, in a vain endeavor to
comfort him.

"Ah! but I made sure of that by going
to the florist's afterward. How can I
enter into the pleasures of the season
when my heart is so heavy and sad?
I'm obliged to you for your kindness
and sympathy, old fellow, but really I
can't."

Thus ended the matter for the pres-
ent, and Charley went home for the
night.

He was not so certain of Lydia's dis-
like for his friend. Had he not noticed
the sad, listless expression that ap-
peared at times upon her face despite
her endeavor to hide it? Was he not
more capable of rendering a fair judg-
ment than his love-sick friend? Didn't
he know a thing or two about
such affairs, even if he had never
been really in love himself? Yes,
Charley thought so, and lay
awake long after midnight thinking
and planning. Suddenly he sat up in
bed with a jerk and his fist flew out
and came down with a crack on his shin
that but for his enthusiasm would have
made him wince. "I have it!" he ex-
claimed, and turning over he went
peacefully to sleep.

The next few days he carried about
with him a certain air of mystery, and
when he met his friend Jack a curious
smile illumined his features. But Jack,
poor, dear, blind fellow! was oblivious
to every thing excepting his own great
grief, and suspected nothing.

It was Saturday afternoon, the day
before Easter, and we find Charley

making his way rapidly across the
street to the florist's, evidently trying
to avoid detection.

When he reappeared a good-sized box
reposed under his arm and a generous
smile suffused his always pleasing
countenance. From his sections it
would almost seem, if one did not know
him, jolly Charley Walters, that he
was bent on some evil mission. He
slipped around the corner, whispered a
few mysterious words into the ears of a
youngster standing there, transferred
the box he was carrying to his willing
hands, took a silver piece from his
pocket, gave it to the boy and was
gone.

Next morning Jack must go to church.
Charley won't hear to any thing else.
The church was decorated much as it
was last Easter, the congregation was
much the same, as was also the service.
They are seated in one of the back pews
and are glancing around when—what
is the matter with Jack? His actions
are quite alarming; but don't be appre-
hensive, dear reader, for what he sees is
only a very pretty young lady with a
happy smile on her face and a lovely
bunch of roses nodding at her corsage.
Just such as he had sent her the year
before. Has the past year been all a
terrible dream and is this that first
Easter, the day on which he had ex-
pected to be so happy, or is the present
scene an optical delusion, the vision of
a disordered brain? While all this and
much more was passing through Jack's
brain Charley sat composedly back in
his seat apparently much engrossed
with the speaker's remarks, and when
the congregation was finally dismissed
he detained his friend in the vestibule
of the church on one pretext or another
until Lydia approached. To Jack's ut-
ter amazement she stepped forward, ex-
tended her neatly-gloved hand frankly,
invited him to call, gave him her
sweetest smile and was gone before he
could utter a word or make a move.

"What does it mean, Charley; what
shall I do? Am I awake or is this all a
dream?"

"Never more wide awake in your life,
my dear boy," chuckled Charley, "and as
to what you're to do, I can only give
this advice: Accept this gracious invita-
tion without delay. And until I see
you again, good-bye."

We will not follow Jack as, with
light, quick steps that he has been a
stranger to this long while, he goes to
the home of his loved one. We will
leave him in peace with her and will
not listen to the explanations and tender
words that are spoken during this, the
happiest moment of their lives.

When next Jack sees Charley he has
to seek him at his own domicile, and he
goes at him with a good-natured rush,
preceded and followed and interspersed



SHE EXTENDED HER NEATLY-GLOVED
HAND.

by the discharge of a whole artillery of
happy laughter.

"Confess! you rascal! you scheming,
jolly meddler. Who sent those flowers
and put my card with best wishes writ-
ten on it into the box? Who laid the
neatest, nicest, happiest, luckiest plot
in the world and carried it out to the
satisfaction of all parties concerned?
Oh! I've found you out, and now you'll
have to congratulate me, old boy, and
promise you'll be best man at the
wedding, which Lydia, dear little girl,
has consented to attend with me in the
near future." WILLIS S. EDSON.

THE EASTER MESSAGE.

Once more the promise of the spring,
The quickening and awakening
Of sap and shoot,
And tender root.
Once more the miracle of birth
Along the length and breadth of earth;
Of life for death.
Released again from winter's doom
Of frozen days, from Lenten gloom,
We seem to stand
In some new land,
And fresh the breeze that blows abroad
That brings the message of our Lord,
The Heavenly breath
Of life for death.
Oh! spirit folded in thy sleep,
Oh! soul long buried fathoms deep
Beneath the old
Material mold,
Fling off the load that, year by year,
Has veiled thy sight and dulled thine ear
As the lark
Doth, soaring, hark
To heavenly sounds, so hearken thou
To that low voice that calleth now
Across the dark.
Oh! wake and hark.
The night goes fast! Oh, wake and pray,
For 'tis the dawn of Easter Day,
When Heaven doth lift
Above the drift
Of self and sense; when budding earth
Renews the parable of birth;
When Christ doth wake
With us to break
The bond of sense, which is our pall,
Doth wake and wait while He doth call:
"Oh, here and now
Awaken thou!"
—Moss Perry, in Youth's Companion.

NEW TARIFF BILL.

Provisions of the New Tariff Bill Presented
By the Majority of the House Ways and
Means Committee.

WASHINGTON, April 1.—At a special
meeting of the Ways and Means Com-
mittee yesterday Chairman McKinley
presented the Republican Tariff bill.
The minority will be allowed ten days
in which to offer amendments and pre-
pare their views before the bill is re-
ported to the House. The bill, accord-
ing to Chairman McKinley, will effect a
reduction of \$45,000,000.

Hides have been placed on the duty-
able list at fifteen per cent ad valorem
with a proviso allowing a drawback on
exported goods made from imported
hides equal to the rate of duty paid.
The duty on tin plate is doubled and a
duty of 1½ cents per pound imposed
on Mexican lead and silver ores.

The additions made to the free list are
as follows:

Acids used for medicinal, chemical or
manufacturing purposes, not specially pro-
vided for; agates, unmanufactured; amber,
unmanufactured or crude gum; aniline
salts; any animal imported especially for
breeding purposes, provided that no such
animal shall be admitted free except it be
pure bred, of a recognized breed, and has
been duly registered in the book of record
established for that breed (the Secretary of
the Treasury may prescribe regulations for
the strict enforcement of these provisions);
animals brought into the United States for
a period not exceeding six months for the
purpose of exhibition or competition for
prizes offered by any agricultural or fairs
association—but a bond shall be given in ac-
cordance with the regulations prescribed
by the Secretary of the Treasury; also teams
and the wagons or other vehicles actually
owned by persons emigrating from foreign
countries to the United States with their
families and in actual use for the pur-
pose of such emigration under such
regulations as the Secretary of
the Treasury may prescribe; articles
in a crude state used in dyeing or tanning,
not specially enumerated for in the schedule;
barrel or hogshead. Books and pamphlets
printed exclusively in languages other than
English, also books and music in raised
prints used exclusively by the blind. En-
gravings, photographs, etc., things bound
or unbound, imported by authority or
for the use of the United States, or for the use
of the library of Congress. Braids, plaits, laces
and similar manufactures suitable for mak-
ing or ornamenting hats, bonnets and hoods,
composed of straw, chip, grass, palm leaf,
willow, calico or rattan.

Cabinets of old coins and medals and other
collections of antiquities—but the term "an-
tiquities," as used in this act, shall include
only such articles as are suitable for souve-
nirs or cabinet collections and which shall
have been produced at any period prior to
the seventeenth century; catgut, without or
wormgut, unmanufactured or not further
manufactured than in strings or cord; chei-
rony root, raw, dried or undried, but un-
ground; coal tar, crude, and pitch of coal
tar; coral, uncut.

Dandelion roots, raw, dried or undried,
but unground; diamonds and other precious
stones, rough or uncut, including glaziers'
and engravers' diamonds, not set, diamond
dust and jewels to be used in the manufac-
ture of watches; drugs, such as bark, beans,
berries, balsams, buds, bulbs and bulbous
roots, excrescences, such as nutgalls, fruits,
flowers, dried fibrous and dried insects,
grains, gum and gum resin, herbs, leaves,
lichens, mosses, nuts, roots and stems, spices,
vegetables, seeds, aromatic and seeds of
mordant growth, woods used expressly for
dyeing, any of the foregoing which are not
edible and are in a crude state and not ad-
vanced in value or condition by refining or
grinding, or by any other process of manu-
facture, and not specially provided for in
this act.

Eggs of birds, fish and insects—the old
provision reading eggs.

Fish, the product of American fisheries
and fish caught by American vessels in the
open waters of the lakes within the bound-
ary between the States and the Do-
minion of Canada; floor matting, manufac-
tured from round or split straw, including
what is commonly known as Chinese mat-
ting; fruits, green, ripe or dried, not es-
pecially enumerated or provided for in this
act.

Glass plates or disks, rough cut or un-
wrought, for use in the manufacture of
optical instruments, spectacles and eye
glasses and suitable only for such use.

Grasses and fibers, Tampico fibers, jute,
jute butts, manilla, Sisal grass, sunn and all
other textile grasses or fibers of veget-
able substances unmanufactured or
undressed, not specially provided for in
this act.

Grasses and oils, such as are commonly
used in soap-making or in wire drawing or
for stuffing or dressing leather and such as
are fit only for such uses, not specially pro-
vided for in this act.

Human hair, raw, uncleaned and not
drawn.

Old scrap or refuse India rubber which has
been worn out by use and is fit only for manu-
facture.

Ivory and vegetable ivory not sawed, cut
or otherwise manufactured, the present pro-
visions reading "ivory" unmanufactured.

Natural mineral waters and all mineral
waters not effervescent or artificial, and
mineral salts.

Molasses, testing not above 50 degrees by
the polariscope; provided that if an export
duty shall hereafter be laid upon molasses
by any country from whence the same may
be imported, it shall be subject to duty as
provided by law at the date of the passage
of this act.

Moss, seaweeds and vegetable substances,
crude or manufactured, not otherwise spe-
cially provided for in this act.

Newspapers and periodicals, but the term
"periodicals" as herein used shall be under-
stood to embrace only unbound or paper
covered publications, containing current
literature of the day and issued regularly at
stated periods, as weekly, monthly or quar-
terly.

Nut oil, or oil of nuts, not otherwise spe-
cially provided for, olive oil for manu-
facturing and mechanical purposes, unfit for
eating and not otherwise provided for in
this act; star of roses, sperm-ceti, whale
and other fish oils of American fisheries and
all other articles the produce of such fish-
eries.

Opium, crude or unmanufactured and not
adulterated, containing 9 per centum and
over of morphia.

Ores of nickel.

Paper stock, pulp of grasses and poplar or
other woods fit only to be converted into
paper.

Peat, whether of, not sawed, cut, polished
or otherwise manufactured.

Platina, ingots, bars, sheets and wire.

Potash, crude "black salts," chloride of
potash, nitrate of potash or saltpetre, crude;
sulphate of potash, crude.

Rags, all not otherwise specially provided
for by this act.

Red wax, or raddie, used in making
lenses.